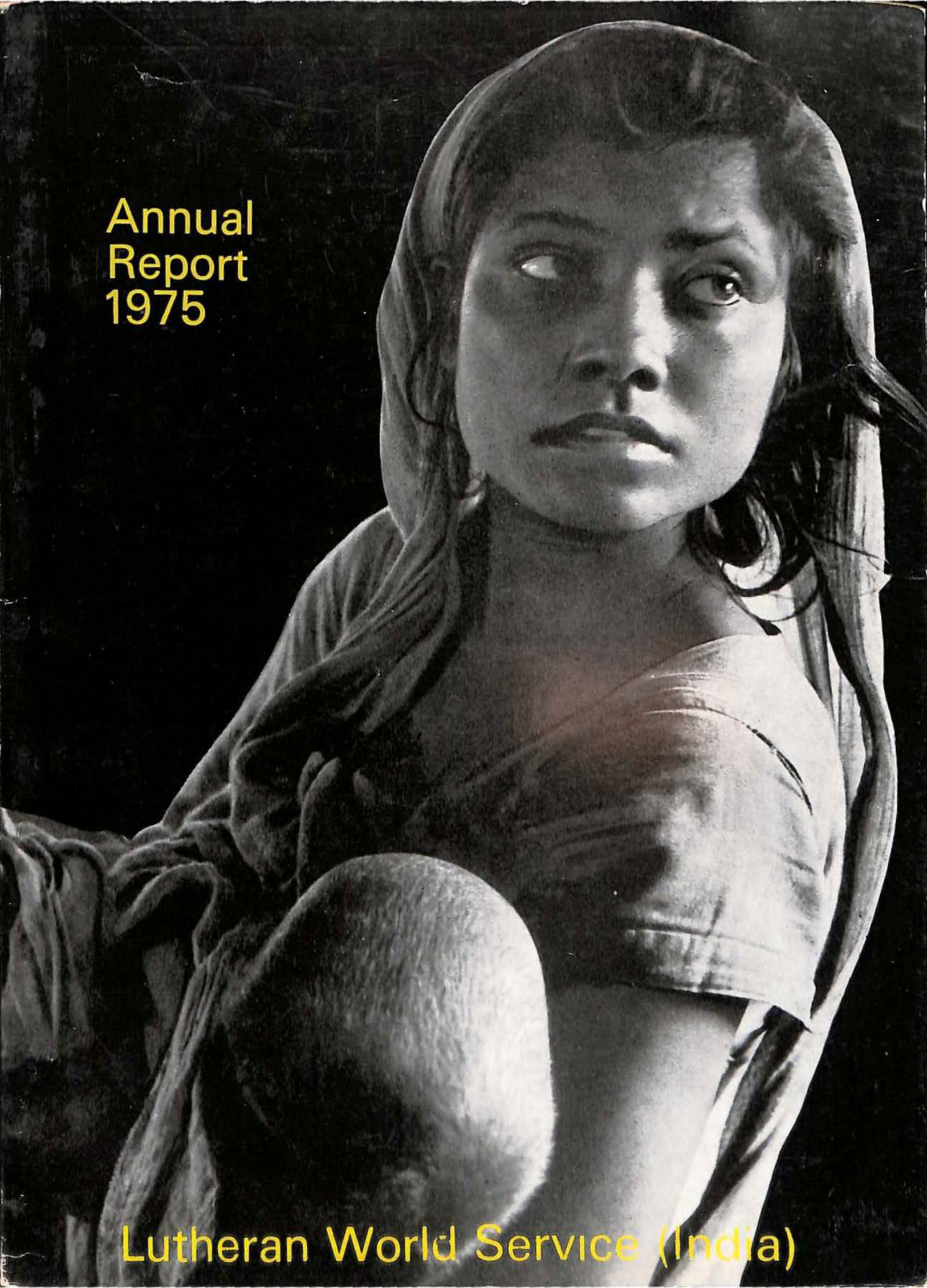
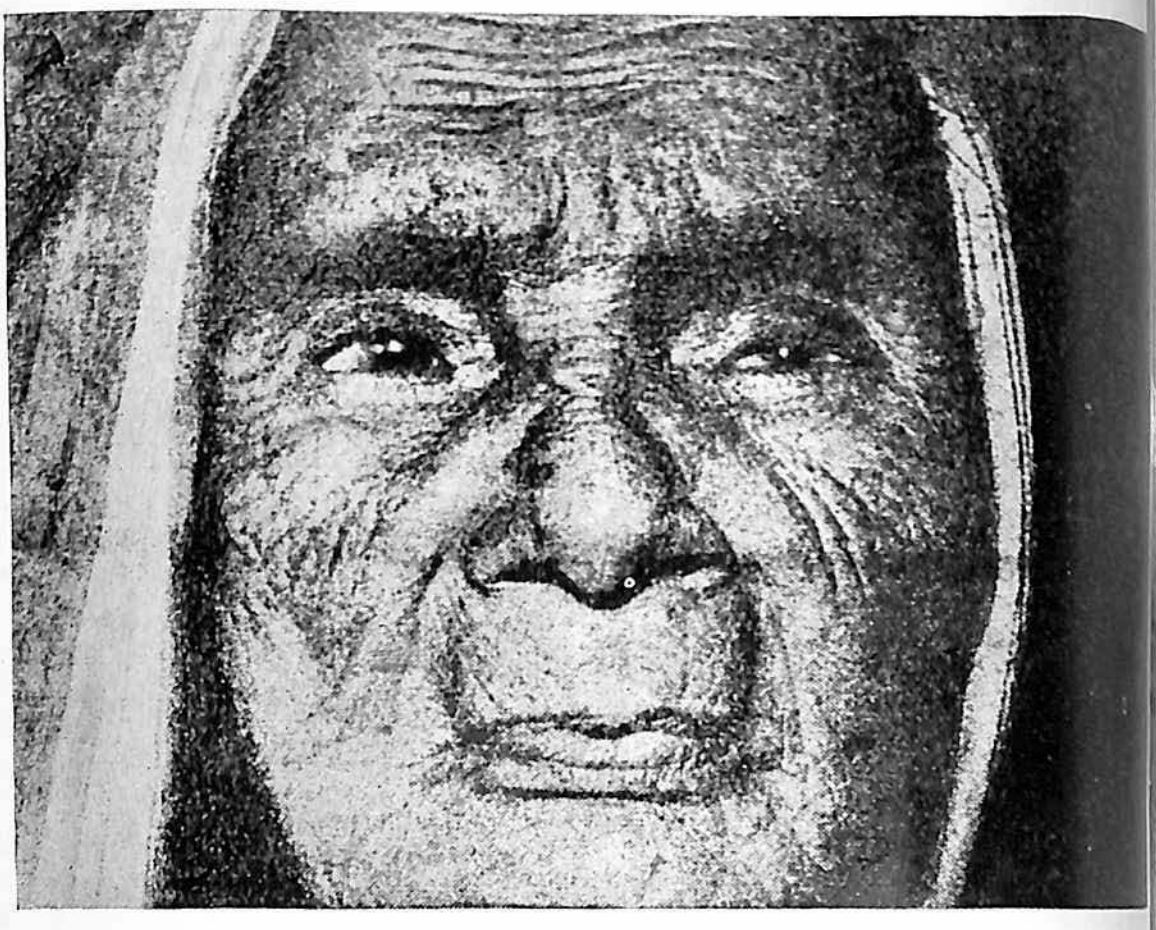


Annual Report 1975

Lutheran World Service (India)

From initial planning to final implementation of their various programmes, Lutheran World Service work in close collaboration with the Government of West Bengal. Recognising the futility of mere aid in the context of a problem intimidatingly vast, their programmes are related to the needs and desires of the people concerned, and the emphasis is always on sustained internal growth.



Her grandfather borrowed twenty rupees. She paid with her life

She is typical of millions of our rural poor, who have slaved for generations because of some paltry debts.

It usually started by some farmer taking a small loan. The interest on this was so exorbitant that he was in debt all his life. On his death, the burden would pass on to his family. Soon the rich creditor would simply take over and do what he pleased.

These rural poor have never known what freedom is. Now Government has stepped in. The system of bonded labour has been abolished. Anybody practising it will be severely punished by law. The former bonded labour are now free to live their own lives and shape their future.

Government has made the first move. But, now, we the people must help ourselves. Working together, striving together, we can remove all obstacles to the nation's progress and help bequeath a future our children will be proud of.

20-Point Programme for Prosperity

- Reduction of prices; display of stock position
- Agricultural land ceiling; redistribution of land
- Housing sites in rural areas
- Abolition of bonded labour
- Liquidation of rural indebtedness
- Minimum wages for agricultural labour
- Better irrigation for greater productivity
- More power for greater production
- Development of handloom sector
- Better cloth for more people
- Socialisation of urban land
- Property valuation; punishment for tax evasion
- Confiscation of smugglers' properties
- Liberalisation of investment procedures
- Worker participation in industry
- National permit scheme for road transport
- Income tax relief to the middle class
- Essential commodities at controlled prices for students
- Controlled prices for text books and stationery
- Increased employment and training opportunities

Let's get on with the job.

From "The Statesman"

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

One evening I was returning fairly late from Dum Dum Airport, Calcutta when I suddenly saw in an almost deserted street a small child sitting all by herself on the pavement. This child symbolised at a glance the problems facing so many children in India.

The children are the hope of the future in every nation. The Lutheran World Service desires to put all its stress on development programmes but in the midst of all our endeavours we have decided not to forget the children. Caring for the children will create a better future for the country.

On the opposite page you will find an advertisement we have cited from the "Statesman", Calcutta. An old women is depicted. She did not get the opportunity every human being has the right to. Those who are old we cannot do much for but we have numerous possibilities to do alot for the children and the younger generation.

Our efforts will be in conformity with the Government programmes for social and economic uplift.

Whatever we were able to do during 1975 was due to the assistance given us by the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva and its Donor Agencies. We extend our sincere and grateful thanks to all who supported us.

We are also grateful to those who are connected with the Geneva programme and who visited us during the year. By name we will only mention our Geneva representatives, Mr. B.W. Neldner, Secretary for Programme Administration, Mr. G. Rygh, Secretary for Emergency Projects and Mr. Jan Jearnes, CDS Agricultural Secretary. Other visitors came from Scandinavian countries, East and West Germany, U.S.A., U.K. and Canada.

We are deeply grateful to the Government for all cooperation and assistance.

Having summarised our activities during 1975 we now look ahead towards 1976. Our deepest wish is to serve those in need and help them to a better future. In the eyes of God every human being is precious and entitled to personal dignity and the common human rights which would enrichen his spiritual and temporal existance.

Olav Hodne

OLAV HODNE

January, 1976

OH:mr

LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE
INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The Lutheran World Service (LWS) India is a continuation of the former Cooch Behar Refugee Service (CBRS) which was operated by the Lutheran World Federation/World Service in cooperation with the Swedish Mission, Cooch Behar.

The CBRS started its operation in the District of Cooch Behar, North Bengal in the year 1966. It was closed in April 1974. During these years a number of Refugee Resettlement Colonies were established and developed. Among these we may mention the Rampur-Jorai area in the North Eastern part of the District where some 30,000 refugees have been aided in some way or other. We may also mention the Jamodar Bose area near Dinhata and the Sharmila Bose Colony in Mekliganj. There are similar Colonies in four out of five Sub-Divisions of the District. Educational and medical assistance and the establishment of small scale industrial units, agricultural assistance and individual self-help were part of the socio-economic uplift programme of the CBRS. Altogether 76 Educational Institutions were established including a College in Tufanganj. Medical service was rendered from a small Hospital and two Health Clinics and a students Eye-Clinic cared for poor refugee students.

Emergency assistance was rendered at the time of emergencies. We may mention two major emergency situations, the flood which occured in North Bengal in the year 1968 and the influx of evacuees from East Pakistan in 1971. In 1971 camps for approximately 140,000 evacuees were established, including 5 Field Hospitals and several camp schools. The evacuee programme continued till the evacuees returned to a liberated Bangladesh in the first part of 1972.

LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE

At the closure of the CBRS the Lutheran World Federation/ World Service, Geneva decided to start an operational and expanded programme in West Bengal, from the onset of 1975. However, due to unprecedented floods in 1974 in the Northern and Southers parts of West Bengal as well as drought in the Western region of the State the LWS took up an emergency programme ahead of the planned development programme. A temporary office was opened in New Kenilworth Hotel in the month of November, 1974. This office served as our headquarters till we moved into our present permanent office at 3, Hungerford Street, Calcutta in April this year.

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SHORT REVIEW OF 1975 PROGRAMME

BHATAR, BURDWAN

In the field the Bhatar programme has got a good start. Under this year's programme six schools have been constructed for the Tribal and Refugee section of the people. A dispensary has been built and is functioning. A housing programme is under way and a social uplift programme has started. Several small scale industries have been established and a number of other activities can be seen in the Tribal villages of Bhatar.

NORTHERN DISTRICTS (BENGAL)

In North Bengal the Flood Emergency Programme in the Patlakawa and Sonapur areas of Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri Districts has been followed by an agricultural programme.

Sericulture was taken up on an experimental basis and has shown great potential. It is now being extended to all the North Bengal Districts.

SOUTHERN DISTRICTS (BENGAL)

In the District of Murshidabad rehousing programme for flood erosion people is in continuous process. A Nutrition programme for children and expectant and nursing mothers was started by the middle of the year and several thousand people affected by new floods this year have been assisted. In the Districts of Bankura and Purulia excavation of irrigation tanks was taken up in cooperation with the District authorities under Food for Work.

NORTH BIHAR

North Bihar was faced with one of the worst floods ever and some 13 million people were to a larger or lesser degree affected by the devastating floods. The LWS gave immediate aid to thousands of people in Patna and the neighbourhood and has since carried out a combined relief and development programme in the District of Vaishali.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

BHATAR

Jawaharlal Nehru on the eve of Independence said, "the ambition of the greatest man of our generation (Gandhi) has been to wipe every tear from every eye" - for there cne be no real freedom unless it signifies the ending of poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality of opportunity.

Our programme request is normally headed, "Service and assistance in areas of Need". This has always been the

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criterion on which we have based our programmes. I still remember my first visit to Bhatar Block in the District of Burdwan together with a representative of the West Bengal Government. We walked through the Tribal villages and areas inhabitated by refugees who had come from East Pakistan. The people were not only poor and forlorn but they seemed as if they had also lost their spirit and hope of a better life. It was certainly an area of need. What was lacking was somebody to assist them. One year of service has been completed. Looking back and asking ourselves what has been achieved we can point to several things: -

1. Education

Education facilities have been created for some 1,500 children through the six schools the LWS constructed in 1975. These schools are now run by Managing Committees and the salaries of the staff are paid by the Education Department.

Education is vital in every society and children are the future leaders of a country. What is being done for the children is being done for the country. Education in a Community where ignorance and backwardness have been the most predominant features is in itself a kind of revolution (in such a Community). In the Tribal and Refugee Communities of Bhatar educational facilities for the children means much more than people of higher cultural standard may visualise. These people have been dependant on literate people even to explain what is written in the newspapers or in Bulletins sent out by the Government. They have been accustomed to signing legal documents by putting their thumb impression on the paper, having to trust others to explain what are the contents of the documents. This has often led to disastrous results as quite often these people have found themselves in debt which had never been incurred by them or they had signed away property without realising it.

Educational facilities for the children will create a different community in the future. A community aware of their rights and becoming equal partners in the uplift of the nation. We are, not only constructing a few schools but we are partakers in creating a better society.

2. Medical Services

At the end of September 1975 the LWS Health Clinic in Orgram was inaugurated. There are now three trained Santal Nurses working, serving their own Tribal Community. There were no medical facilities in this part of Bhatar Block. The need is prevalent as the great Majority of the Tribal and Refugee population in Bhatar

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are day agricultural labourers depending on working on other peoples fields. Agricultural work is available only about six out of twelve months in the year and in the lean seasons it is even difficult for them to get one meal a day. Naturally this affects the health of these people. Undernourishment is very common especially among children. When we started our work in Bhatar Block 132 villages were without drinking water. Either they had to fetch water from miles away or they drank stagnant water from tanks or from small rivulets which dry up and become just muddy water in the dry season. It should be easy to understand how this affects their general health. The Health Clinic established by the LWS was more than welcome and large numbers of people are treated daily. Some come walking others come in ox-carts from far away. The Clinic is a serving factor in this field of need.

3. Agricultural Assistance and Housing Programmes

The Santals are used to constructing earthen houses wherever possible. Most of the Santal villages in the Bhatar area were in ruins. The LWS has taken up a housing project and completed some 300 houses by now. The Santals are building the houses themselves. During the construction period they received some food assistance. The LWS has aided them with doors and windows and most of their houses have tile roofs. Starting up this programme was not easy. It was decided to go slowly and motivate the people first. The people were told that we were ready to assist them provided they were ready to cooperate and do their part of the project. The programme started in nearby villages of Orgram and we saw to it that whatever we did promise was given without delay. This created trust and willingness and cooperation from their side and a number of villages have now changed entirely from what they were before. Not only have new houses come up but better and more spacious houses have been made and the villages look quite different. Village roads have been constructed, every village has its own drinking water supply some of them also have irrigation facilities. The jungles have been cleared around the houses and almost every inch of the land available has been utilised. The result is that the Tribals as well as the Refugees in far off villages are now urging the LWS to come and assist them.

A seed bank has been started on an experimental basis in one village run by themselves and people are preserving seeds for the next sowing season. More cultivable land has been added to the former small plots. The progress is apparent and the programme is now being extended to encompass a larger area than during 1975.

4. Establishment of Small Scale Industries

Several small scale industries have been established during 1975: -

a) Two training centres for Sewing have been opened both for women and for men. An excellent instructor has been put in charge and the partakers are being taught everything that goes with the trade for instance, cutting according to patterns, sewing embroidery and also how to handle the machines properly. During 1976 a few small cooperatives will be formed and these will be production centres independent of any more financial assistance.

b) A knitting centre is training some women in knitting. Knitting machines have been purchased and the first trainees on completion of the course will be teachers in the new centres.

c) Two Weaving Sections with semi-automatic looms are in operation. Some financial aid is given during the training period. These centres will also go into production on cooperative basis in 1976. The LWS will only operate one training centre in the future.

d) A Dokra Art Centre is a fine art centre for traditional brassware. This art is confined to small groups who have learnt their trade from their forefathers during centuries. With change of time, however, this art has in many places almost died out. This art was normally religious in nature and, therefore, limited the scope of the artisans. However, in the present time there is great scope for developing this art and adapting it to modern designs and use.

e) Bedi making: In a number of places in West Bengal bedi making has turned out to be a source of living for a great number of refugees. The bedi is a local cigarette which is in great demand because it is cheap. We have engaged a group of young people to make bedis. It may finally assist between 100 and 200 refugee families in refugee colonies in Bhatar.

f) Ring well and culvert making unit: Two small production centres for ring well making-culvert making units and a small carpentry workshop has been set up. The people engaged are living by their work and being a small group they now work without any financial assistance from our side.

5. Administrative Field Centre and Complex

During this year an administrative centre has been completed with quarters for staff and warehouse and training centres for the different activities.

NORTH BENGAL DISTRICTS

1. The Emergency Programme started in the month of October, 1974 and continued till the month of April, 1975 in the Districts of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Malda and West Dinajpur. The worst affected areas were Patlakawa in Cooch Behar District and Sonapur area in Jalpaiguri. In these two areas some 4,000 families have been rendered destitute due to the flood disaster.

   Under the Emergency Programme several thousand families were rehoused and a great number of tubewells were sunk in the Districts of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, West Dinajpur and Malda.

2. Agricultural Assistance

   We closed the emergency programme and followed up with an agricultural development programme for approximately 4,000 agricultural families in Patlakawa and Sonapur. Twice seed assistance and fertilizers were given to these people and irrigation facilities were provided to part of the area. Though the land was covered with sand, two seasons were sufficient to bring the land back to almost normal fertility with the exception of a few portions where the sand was several feet deep.

   By the middle of the year it was found that out of the total number of families only about 200 families could be termed destitute. However, their health situation had improved so much that we found that we could close both the emergency nutrition programme and the emergency Health Clinic at the end of the year. Though our agricultural work will continue in this area till the next rainy season the economic situation has improved enough to leave out any direct assistance in the form of aid and we can concentrate on developing their land mainly through irrigation facilities.

3. Sericulture

   A new feature of our North Bengal programme this year is the starting up of sericulture. There is scope for development of sericulture in all the five districts of North Bengal, Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, West Dinajpur and Malda. Sericulture was long ago introduced by the Government in the District of Malda, and this agricultural industry has largely influenced the development of this District. In one area of Malda District the entire population of about 100,000 people are engaged in sericulture and the annual output is stated to be of the value of Rs.18 million a year.

   Strangely enough sericulture has not been developed much in the other four Districts of North Bengal. There is surely vast scope for doing so and the LWS

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has now taken up sericulture as a part of its programme, a programme we are convinced will positively help in solving the problems of a large number of economically backward families.

The West Bengal Government has encouraged us very much in our endeavour to introduce sericulture and already assisted us in a number of ways.

EMERGENCY PROGRAMMES

REVIEW

First Quarter	-	We were phasing out our 1974-75 North Bengal Famine Emergency Programmes
Second Quarter	-	We had no emergency programmes
Third Quarter	-	We started our Nutrition and Housing Programmes in Murshidabad Districts. At the end of thie quarter we participated in relief and rehabilitation activities in Patna township and Vaishali District of Bihar. Flood emergency programmes in Murshidabad District commenced during this quarter.
Fourth Quarter	-	We continued our various relief & rehabilitation programmes.
	-	Over 25,000 children, nursing and expectant mothers were fed in Murshidabad and Vaishali Districts. In addition to the above, 340,000 meals Emergency Rations were distributed in Patna.
	-	About 1,250 families have been rehoused in Murshidabad and Vaishali Districts.
	-	800 tubewells were sunk in Murshidabad and Vaishali Districts.
	-	132,422 people were given clothes and blankets in West Bengal & Vaishali
	-	3,500 fresh cases and 1,200 follow up cases were treated through our Field Hospital in Raghopur Block of Vaishali
	-	Food for work projects' were undertaken in Purulia, Bankura and Vaishali Districts and about 400,000 mandays were involved.

ATTACHMENT TO EMERGENCY REPORT (1975) - INDIA

I.

UTILISATION

	Rice Tonnes	Milk Tonnes	Wheat Flour Tonnes	Fish Powder Tonnes	Emergency Rations Tonnes	Biscuits Tonnes	Sanasol Phials	Pulses Tonnes
1. MSD programmes (feeding/ housing)	284	19.9		5.6			4,324	6.2
2. Patna feeding programme					60			
3. Vaishali feeding programme		0.6			29.5	0.5		
4. Vaishali FFW	13.8							
5. Vaishali Housing	3.9							
6. Purulia FFW			210					
7. Bankura FFW			104					
8. Misc.	55.00	5.00	12.4	21.8	2.00	0.4	792	
Total	356.7	25.5	326.4	27.4	91.5	0.9	5,116	6.2

II.

UTILISATION$_U$

	Saries	Dhotis	Readymade garments	Blankets	Tubewells
1. Murshidabad	182	197	444	332	5
2. Vaishali	20,165	17,692	20,739	15,040	790
3. North Bengal	12,150	5,048	14,095	315	-
4. Misc.	2,600	3,000	7,572	12,815	-
Total	35,097	25,937	42,850	28,538	795

III. NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES - EMERGENCY PROGRAMME (INDIA) 1975

	Feeding	Clothing	Blankets	Housing	Food for Work	Medical	Tubewells
1. Murshidabad	17,519 (daily)	822	332	1,375			500
2. Patna	350,000					9,800	
3. Vaishali	1,000	58,596	15,040	5,500	6,000 (daily)	4,700	79,000
4. Purulia					200,000		
5. Bankura					100,000		
6. North Bengal		31,293				10,677	
7. Miscellaneous	6,000 (daily)	13,172	13,166				
Total		103,883	28,538	6,875		25,177	79,500

PURULIA, BANKURA - FOOD FOR WORK PROJECT

AMOUNT SPENT IN RUPEES	PURULIA	BANKURA
EXPENDITURE - CASH	Rs. 210,000	Rs. 104,000
- KIND (Wheat flour)	210 m.t.	104 m.t.
No. of Development Blocks involved	29	4
No. of Schemes executed	62	14
No. of Mandays involved	200,000	100,000

FAMINE EMERGENCY 1974/75 (JAN. - APRIL)

	Cooch Bihar	Malda	West Dinajpur
No. of tubewells sunk		400	400
No. benefitted		40,000	40,000
No. of families rehoused	2,000	250	250
Nutrition Programme No. covered	24,000		
Distribution of - blankets	10,000		
childrens clothing	30,000		
saries	3,000		

COMMODITIES UTILISED IN COOCH BEHAR

Wheat Flour	80 m.t.
Milk Powder	20 m.t.
Emergency Rations	28 m.t.

ATTACHMENT TO LWS ANNUAL REPORT 1975

BHATAR

No. of tubewells sunk	201
No. benefitted	20,100
No. of irrigation pumps in programme	10
Medical out patients treated	6,026

Housing 226 completed and 302 under construction

26 miles of village roads completed under Food for Work Programme

NORTH BENGAL

1. Agricultural Assistance

Distribution	- Paddy seeds	8.5 tonnes among 2,000 flys.
	- Maize seeds	500 kgs. among 291 flys.
	- Wheat seeds	26 tonnes among 2076 flys.
	- vegetable seeds	among 3,853 flys.
Insecticide spraying		32 acres
No. of shallow tubewells installed		23
Area irrigated by tubewells		142 acres

2. Sericulture

	Jalpaiguri	Cooch Behar
No. of mulberry plantations	68	52
Area covered	41 acres	42 acres
Mulberry saplings/cuttings planted	2.5 million nearly	

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